

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 PA-02 H-02
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DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:RGH

APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN

PA/PRS - MR. CARTER

H - MR. FLATEN

SSM - MR. MC ANDREW

NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH

NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER

NEA/EGY - MR. MARTHINSEN

NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY SANA

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USMISSION SINAI

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION USNATO

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY DOHA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

USCINCEUR
DOD
JCS WASHDC 0000
CIA WASHDC 0000
USICA
NSC
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS POUCH

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD, TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JUNE 12

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE
EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR JUNE 12, 1978.
FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. HAVE YOU RECEIVED ANYTHING FROM THE ISRAELIS ON THE
AMERICAN REQUESTS -- ANY ANSWERS?

A. NO, NOT YET.
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Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THAT SAUDI ARABIAN-FRENCH ARMS
DEAL?

A. ACTUALLY, THIS AMOUNTS TO A REPEAT OF, IN ESSENCE, OLD
GUIDANCE. I WILL BE GLAD TO GO OVER IT AGAIN -- THE
NEWEST STORY BEING THE ONE IN "OCTOBER." WE NOTE THAT THE
FRENCH GOVERNMENT HAS DENIED THE STORY.

SAUDI ARABIA IN THE PAST HAS PURCHASED FRENCH ARMS -- AIR
DEFENSE MISSILES, TANKS, AND OTHER GROUND EQUIPMENT --
BUT WE HAVE NOT HAD INFORMATION OF ANY PENDING FRENCH SALE

OF THIS MAGNITUDE TO SAUDI ARABIA OR ONE BEING PAID FOR
BY THE SAUDIS, WHETHER TO THEM OR TO OTHERS.

AND I REPEAT, AS I THINK SOMEONE DID OVER THE WEEKEND,
THE ASSURANCE THAT THE SAUDIS GAVE US. I'VE SAID TWICE
BEFORE, WHEN THIS KIND OF STORY CAME UP, THAT THEY WILL
NOT ADD TO THEIR COMBAT AIRCRAFT INVENTORY FROM OTHER
COUNTRIES WHILE IT'S PREPARING FOR AND RECEIVING THE 60
F-15'S FROM THE U.S.

BUT THAT WOULDN'T NECESSARILY GO TO THE HEART OF THE STORY. I'M SIMPLY NOTING THE DENIAL AND OUR OWN LACK OF ANY INFORMATION OF ANY SUCH SALE.

Q. WHAT EXACTLY DID THEY DENY? I MEAN, CAN YOU GIVE US THEIR WORDS?

A. THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT SIMPLY DENIED THE STORY.

Q. DENIED ANY SALES AT ALL?

A. I DONT KNOW WHETHER THEY ARE DENYING THAT THERE IS A BILLION DOLLAR SALE OR ANYTHING. THE IMPORT OF THE UNCLASSIFIED

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ARTICLE IS A DOLS 24 BILLION SALE. THAT WAS THE POINT OF THE SPEECH THAT WAS GIVEN NOT LONG AGO, AND THAT IS BEING DENIED.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH BOUTEFLIKA OF ALGERIA LAST SATURDAY?

A. THEY MET FOR TWO HOURS JUNE 10 AT THE ALGERIAN'S REQUEST, AND THEIR DISCUSSION DID DEAL WITH COMMON MATTERS OF INTEREST ON THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA.

Q. (INAUDIBLE) THAT POLISARIO FRONT, MAURITANIA OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

A. NO.

Q. SINCE IT'S UNITED STATES' POSITION THAT THE ISRAELIS OWE US ONE IN TERMS OF ANSWERS, ARE YOU BY ANY CHANCE GETTING IMPATIENT BECAUSE THERE HAVE BEEN NO ANSWERS FORTHCOMING WHICH WOULD START THIS NEGOTIATING PROCESS TO MOVE THE PEACE PROCESS FORWARD IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. THE ANSWER IS NO. THEY HAVE ASSURED US THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE ANSWERS. THEY'RE IN THE PROCESS OF DEVISING

ANSWERS, AND WE EXPECT THAT THEY WILL BE COMING.

Q. IS THERE ANY IMPLIED OR ACTUAL DEADLINE WHEN WE EXPECT THOSE ANSWERS?

A. SIMPLY THAT THEY HAVE SAID THAT TODAY THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE THEM UP, AND I AM NOW TOLD THEY'RE GOING UNCLASSIFIED

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TO HAVE TO CONTINUE DISCUSSING THEM.

I THINK THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE CLEARLY INTERESTED IN THE PEACE PROCESS MOVING FORWARD AND THAT THESE ARE SERIOUS QUESTIONS AND THEY REQUIRE SERIOUS ANSWERS.

Q. HAVE THEY GIVEN YOU A NEW DEADLINE OR NOT?

A. I DONT KNOW OF ONE.

Q. IS IT YOUR VIEW THAT THE PEACE PROCESS NOW HANGS ON THE ISRAELI RESULTS?

A. I DONT WANT TO PIN IT AS SAYING THAT THAT IS THE MAKE OR BREAK ASPECT OF IT. WE DO THINK, AS WE HAVE BEEN SAYING FOR SOME TIME, THAT THOSE QUESTIONS DID NEED TO BE RESOLVED, FOR ANSWERING ONE WAY OR THE OTHER. WE CONTINUE TO THINK THAT THAT WOULD BE USEFUL, AS THE SECRETARY SAID. I DONT HAVE ANYTHING TO ADD TO THAT, THOUGH. I DONT HAVE ANY CHARACTERIZATION OF IT.

Q. ARE THERE ANY QUESTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN POSED TO EGYPT OR JORDAN THAT ALSO FIT INTO THIS PROCESS?

A. WE ARE OBVIOUSLY ALWAYS IN CONTACT WITH THEM. I DO NOT KNOW OF SOMETHING QUITE THAT SPECIFIC WITH EITHER ONE OF THEM.

Q. IS THE U.S., IN ANTICIPATION OF WHATEVER COMES OUT OF THE MIDDLE EAST SHORTLY, PREPARING A NEW PEACE PROPOSAL OF ITS OWN?

A. I SAW THAT STORY. I THINK THE BEST I CAN GIVE YOU THERE IS WHAT THE SECRETARY HAS SAID IN THE PAST, THAT UNDER CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES IT MAY BE THAT WE WOULD FIND IT USEFUL TO OFFER SUGGESTIONS. BUT I DONT THINK THE
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CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE ARISEN YET, BECAUSE WE DONT IN FACT HAVE A CLEAR ANSWER FROM ISRAEL NOR WHAT THAT ANSWER WOULD MEAN TO OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST. AND I THINK I WOULD REALLY HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THAT TIME TO BE ABLE TO OFFER SOMETHING TO YOU.

Q. BACK TO THE STORY OF THE SAUDI ARABIAN ARMS PURCHASE

IN FRANCE. IF THIS STORY PROVES TO BE TRUE, WOULD IT
BE CONSISTENT WITH SECRETARY BROWN'S LETTER TO THE
SENATE COMMITTEE?

A. THAT'S ALL SPECULATIVE. OBVIOUSLY IF SOMETHING
OCCURRED WHICH CONTRADICTED ASSURANCES WE WERE GIVEN,
THEN THAT WOULD BE A CAUSE OF CONCERN. BUT SO FAR WE
HAVE NO REASON TO ... I HAVE NO COMMENT ON SOMETHING
THAT WE DONT THINK HAS HAPPENED. BUT I WILL TELL YOU
THAT WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN SOME ASSURANCES, AND IT IS OUR
UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY ARE BEING UPHELD. VANCE

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